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Damage Control Association

Wildlife Damage Management, Internet Center
for

September 1980

The Probe, Issue 8 - September 1980

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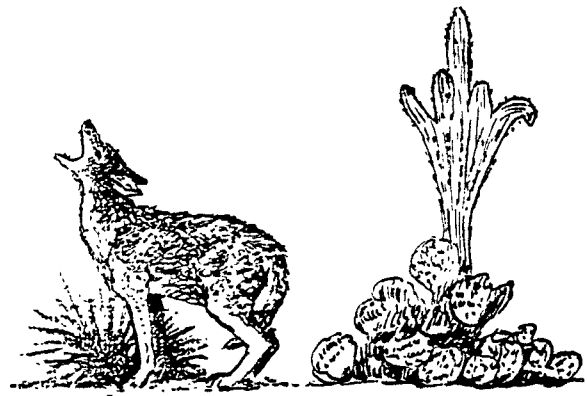
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THE PROBE



National Animal Damage Control Association

No. 8

September, 1980

PROBING FOR THE PROBE

Writing a newsletter is like getting married to a nymphomaniac - - the first couple of months it's a lot of fun. What brought that up is this newsletter is supposed to be the outpouring of words of wisdom, helpful hints, gripes, news and gossip from you ADC types in the field, not the ramblings of the lone stranger. I do appreciate the humor and articles I've gotten from some of you, but these have been few and far between and I would like more help from the field.

I appreciate the cooperation from those of you who heeded my plaintive appeal in the last PROBE to sign up for next year. We've gotten some excellent support so it looks like we can get the PROBE out for the rest of the year. Enclosed is the new registration card. Please fill your card in legibly (my eyes aren't all that good) and send it back to me with your dues. The dues are still \$10 for active members (working ADC types), \$15 for active overseas members (the extra \$5 is the cost of first class postage as we can't use the bulk rate as we do in the U.S.A.) and while we'd like supporting members to kick in at least \$25 or more, we'll appreciate any kind of help they can give us. Remember payment now is for 1981 and helps assure continuity of the Association. If any of you can use extra registration cards, let me know and I'll send you what you need.

And what is the upper crust but a bunch of crumbs held together by dough ?

WHO SAYS ADC DOESN'T COVER THE WATERFRONT !? AND THE DUMPS TOO !

Ki Faulkner (Chief, Div. ADC - USFWS) sent us the following somewhat bewildering but none the less interesting rundown on the conflicts between wildlife and all sorts of people and situations. It is much easier to pick something like this apart than it is to compile the data, so some of the things they missed hit me right away: What about bluebirds pecking grapes ? Waxwings cluttering up highways when they get high on overripe pyracantha berries in the median strip plantings ? Kingbirds depredating on bees ? etc. The chart would be a little more useful if they had coded the individual species involved in a particular situation instead of just lumping them in the broad categories on the bottom of the chart. I also question "human mortalities" under the classification - "Wildlife Resources" ? picky, picky, picky !

U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
ANIMAL DAMAGE CONTROL ACTIVITIES
(OPERATIONAL AND EXTENSION)

SPECIES PROBLEM AREAS	PREDATORS	MAMMALS		FERAL	MISC.	RAPTORS	BIRDS					OTHER
		LACOMORPH, RODENTS	COMMENSAL RODENTS				BLACKBIRDS, CROWS	WATERFOWL, SHORE, GULLS	SONG	FERAL	MISC.	
<hr/>												
<hr/>												
LIVESTOCK:												
CATTLE	X		X	X			X	X		X	X	
DAIRY	X		X	X			X			X		
SHEEP	X		X	X		X					X	
GOATS	X			X		X						
HOGS	X		X	X		X	X			X	X	
POULTRY:												
CHICKENS	X		X	X	X	X	X	X		X		
TURKEYS	X		X	X		X					X	
DUCKS	X		X	X		X	X	X				
GAME FARMS:												
PROPAGATION	X		X			X						
SHOOTING PRESERVES	X		X				X					
FUR FARMS	X		X				X					
BEEES	X	X									X	
ZOOES	X		X				X	X		X	X	
RESEARCH INSTALLATIONS:												
LIVESTOCK	X		X	X			X				X	
PLANT		X	X		X		X			X		
WILDLIFE	X		X	X		X	X					
ENDANGERED SPECIES	X					X	X					
FISH HATCHERIES	X	X	X		X	X	X	X			X	X
WILDLIFE RESOURCES:												
GAME SPECIES	X			X								
INTRODUCTIONS	X					X						
HUMAN MORTALITIES	X											X
GRAINS:												
SEEDING		X					X			X		
SPROUTS					X		X	X				
DOUGH STAGE	X	X	X		X		X		X			
MATURE	X	X			X		X	X	X	X		
FRUITS	X	X	X		X		X	X	X		X	
BERRIES		X	X		X		X	X	X			
NUTS		X					X				X	
MARKET GARDENS:												
SEEDING		X					X					
SPROUTS		X			X		X		X		X	
MATURE	X	X	X		X		X	X	X			
NURSERIES		X			X				X			
RANGE:												
SEEDING		X			X		X		X			
MATURE		X			X							
PASTURES:												
SEEDING		X			X		X		X	X	X	
SEEDLING		X			X		X	X			X	
MATURE	X	X			X							
FORESTS:												
SEEDING		X							X		X	
SEEDLING		X			X							
MATURE	X	X			X							

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SPECIES PROBLEM AREAS	PREDATORS	MAMMALS					BIRDS					
		LAGOMORPH. RODENTS	COMMENSAL RODENTS	FERAL	MISC.	RAPTORS	BLACK BIRDS, CROWS	WATERFOWL, SHORE, GULLS	SONG	FERAL	MISC.	OTHER
WATERSHEDS:												
SEEDING		X							X			
MATURE		X					X					
AIRPORTS	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
RESIDENTIAL:												
HOMES	X	X	X				X		X	X	X	X
GROUNDS	X	X	X		X		X	X	X	X		X
RECREATIONAL	X	X	X		X		X	X		X		X
INDUSTRIAL	X	X	X		X		X	X		X	X	
MUNICIPAL			X				X	X	X	X	X	
STORAGE:												
COLD		X	X									
GRAIN		X	X				X			X		
WAREHOUSES			X							X		
UTILITIES:												
DAMS		X					X		X	X		
GENERATING PLANTS							X		X	X		
SUB STATIONS		X					X					
POWER LINES		X				X	X			X		
TELEPHONE LINES		X				X						
POLES	X					X					X	
BURIED CABLES		X										
DISEASES:												
ANIMAL TO ANIMAL	X	X	X	X	X		X	X		X		
ANIMAL TO MAN	X	X	X	X	X		X		X	X	X	
MONITORING	X	X	X	X	X		X	X				
RESERVOIRS		X						X				
AGRICULTURE:												
IRRIGATION		X										X
STOCK DAMS		X										
FARM PONDS		X										X
BUILDINGS	X	X	X				X		X	X	X	X
HIGHWAYS:		X			X							
COYOTE		PRAIRIE DOG	NORWAY RAT	DOG	DEER	HAWKS	RED WING	DUCKS	ROBIN	PIGEON	MAGPIE	FROGS
MT. LION		GROUND "	HOUSE MOUSE	HOG	BOAR	OWLS	CRACKLE	SAND PIPERS	FINCHES	H. SPARROW	CRANES	TURTLES
BOBCAT		SQUIRREL	ROOF RAT	CAT	MOLE	G. EAGLE	STARLING	SEA GULLS	WAX WING		RAVEN	SNAKES
R & G FOX		GOPHER		GOAT	OPOSSUM	B. EAGLE	COWBIRD	EGRETS	SWALLOWS		DOVES	CRAYFISH
B & G BEAR		PORCUPINE			ARMADILLA		CROW	HERONS	GROSBEAKS		MONK PARAKEET	SALAMANDER
RACCOON		RABBIT			SHREWS			GEESE	HORNED LARK		CORMORANT	ALLIGATOR
SKUNK		WOODCHUCK			MONGOOSE			SWANS			KINGFISHER	
MINK		R & G SQUIRREL			BATS			DUNLIN			VULTURES	
OTTER		FLYING SQUIRREL			ELK						BLUE JAY	
WEASEL		DEER MOUSE			ANTELOPE						WOODPECKERS	
BADGER		COTTON RAT									FLICKER	
		MUSKRAT									PHEASANT	
		NUTRIA										
		PINE MOUSE										
		MEADOW MOUSE										
		PRAIRIE MOUSE										
		CHIPMUNK										
		BEAVER										
		MT. BEAVER										
		WT. FOOTED-MOUSE										

JUNE 11, 1980

WHAT DID HE SAY ?

"Accordingly, you should be aware that at this time it is the Director's intention to take a bold and aggressive step forward in the dramatization of recently identified Important Resource Problem areas and, in particular, the magnitude, dimension and most especially the urgency of this Nation's need to squarely face the impending dire consequences of inaction in the face of these mounting resource problems." [Interior's Planning and Budget Office from Johnny Jones]

Bureaucracy is the seat of government that's getting too big for its britches.

BATS !!!

The first USFWS bat control leaflet extolled the virtue of "building them out" as the best method of controlling a bat problem in buildings. A note in the latest JOURNAL OF WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT [R.M.R.Barclay, etal, Comparison of methods used for controlling bats in buildings. JWM 44(2):502-6] confirms this basic premise. Working with populations of big and little brown bats, they applied sticky repellents to entrances of three buildings, sprayed 50% DDT in two other situations and sealed up the bat entrances in four more sites. The following results were noted in the pre- and post-treatment censuses:

Sticky repellents			DDT spraying			Batproofing		
Bat Numbers			Bat Numbers			Bat Numbers		
Pre-	Post-	Change	Pre-	Post-	Change	Pre-	Post-	Change
29	30	+3%	61	21	-66%	535	242	-55%
41	49	+20%	11	0	-100%	86	14	-84%
11	0	-100%				106	0	-100%
						34	0	-100%

The results are not surprising but are quantitative evidence of what we have long maintained concerning bat control measures. In the one instance where the sticky materials were effective, the residents had closed up entrances previous to the experiment so it was apparently easy to get results. The researchers got a complete kill on a bat roost of 11 bats, but only 66% reduction in a larger roost of 61 bats. They reported the incidence of bat-human encounters increased drastically with the spraying as the residents encountered a number of dead or dying bats within five days of treatment. They also reported other sites that received multiple DDT treatments from which the bats were not completely eliminated. Even sealing was not always effective due to the difficulty of finding all potential entrances.

High fidelity is a drunk going home to his wife every evening.

STEEL LEG HOLD LIVE TRAP - Milton Caroline

Leg hold traps have been in use since the Upper Paleolithic period for capturing large predators to protect humans and for food and clothing. In the Neolithic period, humans became less nomadic because they had learned to domesticate certain species best suited to supply food and clothing. Since predators were ever-present, trapping was important for the protection of this property. In more recent times, trappers were responsible for exploration and future development of both the U.S.A. and Canada as settlers followed the beaver trappers - - beaver being an important source of income.

Even though this was 200 years ago, there was already a movement to control, regulate or otherwise deny the right to use the leg hold traps as they were considered "inhumane". It was also argued that traps were a hazard to non-target species, children and pets and could exterminate a species if continued unabated. But since those objecting could not suggest a reasonable alternative and the need for trapping was realized, their objections were more reasonable than we find prevalent today.

The title of this statement defines the steel leg hold trap as a "live" trap. In the hands of a professional trapper or even a non-professional who follows the rules laid out by professional trapper-educators, there is no question of it being a live trap. It is only those who ignore these principles that the leg hold trap becomes a lethal weapon. The term "live trap" is usually applied to a cage trap, but these if not tended properly can be lethal too. Experience has shown coyotes, bobcats, lions and foxes will rarely enter enclosures as they are apparently deterred by anything overhead that may appear as a barrier to their movement.

For many years the American Humane Association has offered a \$20,000 award to anyone who could develop a humane trap, that is inexpensive, acceptable to the trapper, easy to transport and not hazardous to humans. The Conibear trap is the only one to be recognized and it gained only an honorable mention and a \$2,000 award. It is not completely acceptable because in the size required for coyotes or bobcats, it could kill or maim calves and children and kill goats, sheep or deer.

The steel leg hold trap has always been the most reliable of all tools available to the professional trapper. A coyote that kills for the lust of killing and not mainly for food will frequently disregard all food and fetid baits and possibly even passion scents as well. A coyote educated by an amateur trapper by merely a pinched toe does not forget this experience. In both cases there is no alternative - - the trapper must resort to well-concealed unbaited traps.

The Pan American Sanitary Bureau (World Health Organization) sponsors the U.S.-Mexico Border Health Association which is interested in the prevention of animal-borne diseases, particularly rabies. This is an area of dense human population with environmental factors conducive to the spread of disease so a continual surveillance of wildlife-borne diseases must be maintained. Surveillance is maintained by the capture of a variety of carnivores from which blood is drawn for laboratory analysis. During an outbreak of Venezuelan Equine Encephalomyelitis, 2500 samples were collected by steel leg hold traps in a few short months making it possible to lift the embargo on horse movements within and out of Texas. Steel traps were used to collect samples of blood from coyotes in the panhandle of Texas. It was found that sylvatic plague had moved at least 150 miles east of its assumed eastern terminus. The data were obtained from coyotes that apparently had moved through a variety of infected prairie dog towns.

Attwater prairie chickens, an endangered species, are subject to armadillo, skunk and raccoon nest predation. Although strychnine would not affect prairie chickens and an emergency permit could have been obtained from EPA, its use was prohibited by Interior. Protection could be conducted only by means of leg hold traps. The foster flock of whooping cranes in Idaho is being protected from coyotes with the use of steel traps. USFWS Patuxent Wildlife Research station needed a captive flock of sandhill cranes as a substitute for studying the needs of the whooping cranes. No. 3N Victor traps modified by weakening the springs and attaching rubber hose to the jaws were the only feasible means for collecting sandhills without harm

for study. In similar fashion the studies for the endangered Eastern timber wolves and Texas red wolves are possible only through the use of steel traps.

Among all the issues raised, the non-target assumption is the most popular. Much of the literature prepared by opponents to trapping show ghastly illustrations of small animals which have been caught in tooth-jawed traps and left to die a miserable death. It is true that a steel trap may be so handled that it will do what the antagonists claim. However, when it is necessary to control a coyote-sheep confrontation, the professional trapper is intent upon capturing coyotes and not representatives of other species which are not responsible for the problem. A trap already sprung will not catch the target predator that may pass by later. Any animal may be attracted by a scent to a buried steel trap. Up to this point the trap, if sprung, might not be classed as being selective. But there are a variety of safeguards to provide selectivity. The bait used determines what will be selectively drawn to the trap site. Traps themselves can be adjusted with springs, sponges or green twigs to provide the exact degree of pressure to upset the trigger that the trapper desires. Foot injury is further reduced by the use of drag hooks. When the predator steps into a trap, the immediate reaction is to attempt to escape. The drag hooks soon become entangled in vegetation preventing further escape but not a solid anchor. As there is "give" foot injury is further reduced beyond that protection provided by the open or offset jaw feature.

Up to this point we have referred chiefly to trapping performed for the protection of domestic stock. Also to be considered are chickens, turkeys (poultry fencing is not a certain deterrent to a determined coyote), melons and peanuts which are also affected to a considerable degree. Fur trappers use somewhat similar procedures although there may be definite differences. Species classed as "furbearers" in Texas do not include coyotes, bobcats, lions or "wolves". Fur trappers must be licensed and can take furbearers only within designated seasons. However, furbearers may be taken at any time they invade rural or urban dwelling areas, barns, sheds and poultry producing areas. Under these conditions, there are no non-target species.

There then arises the question of possible extermination of any or all of a species by trapping. Intended extermination of a species may be expected (if time and money are no object) only in the case of wolves. On the high plains of Texas, lobos were exterminated by ranchers who had to protect their cattle and horses. Although wolves were easily trapped, the major means of control was the location of dens. The coyote-red wolf hybrid of the Edwards Plateau, which had started its eastward movement in the 1850's, was extirpated. Had the control operation been needed and conducted over a wider range to the east, the final mongrelization of this species would have been delayed or possibly prevented. As the coyote is much smarter than the wolf, it is ridiculous to even think of extermination of this species in the face of documented evidence of the wide array of chemicals, devices and various forms of hunting and trapping that have been used consistently over a period of years. Even prior to the ban on chemicals, coyote populations were increasing and expanding their range.

The reason for this is that professional programs of control have always been limited to the area of greatest need, whether for economic or health reasons. Traps and dogs handled by professionals are the only means of capturing pumas and bobcats. Those who publicly oppose steel traps find themselves unwittingly in league with sport hunters (not to be confused with "sportsmen"). These are hound dog men who run their dogs on land with or without permission in pursuit of their sport.

The emotional issue is beyond argument. Emotions are strong among those opposed to steel traps and even of any form of capturing and killing wild animals. Emotions are strong among urban dwellers who see wildlife in their backyards as a threat to their health and property. Emotions are strong among ranchers and farmers being forced to watch the decimation of their crops, livestock and wildlife. Our emotions are strong, in particular, because we abhor broad, sweeping, undocumented and even knowingly untruthful allegations. We abhor the action of any and all groups whose aim is to prevent any person from earning his livelihood in his chosen way, especially when he is responsible for the production of food and fiber which feed and clothe his detractors. [condensed from a paper by Milt Caroline, retired USFWS ADC State Supervisor for Texas]

The world does not require so much to be informed as to be reminded.

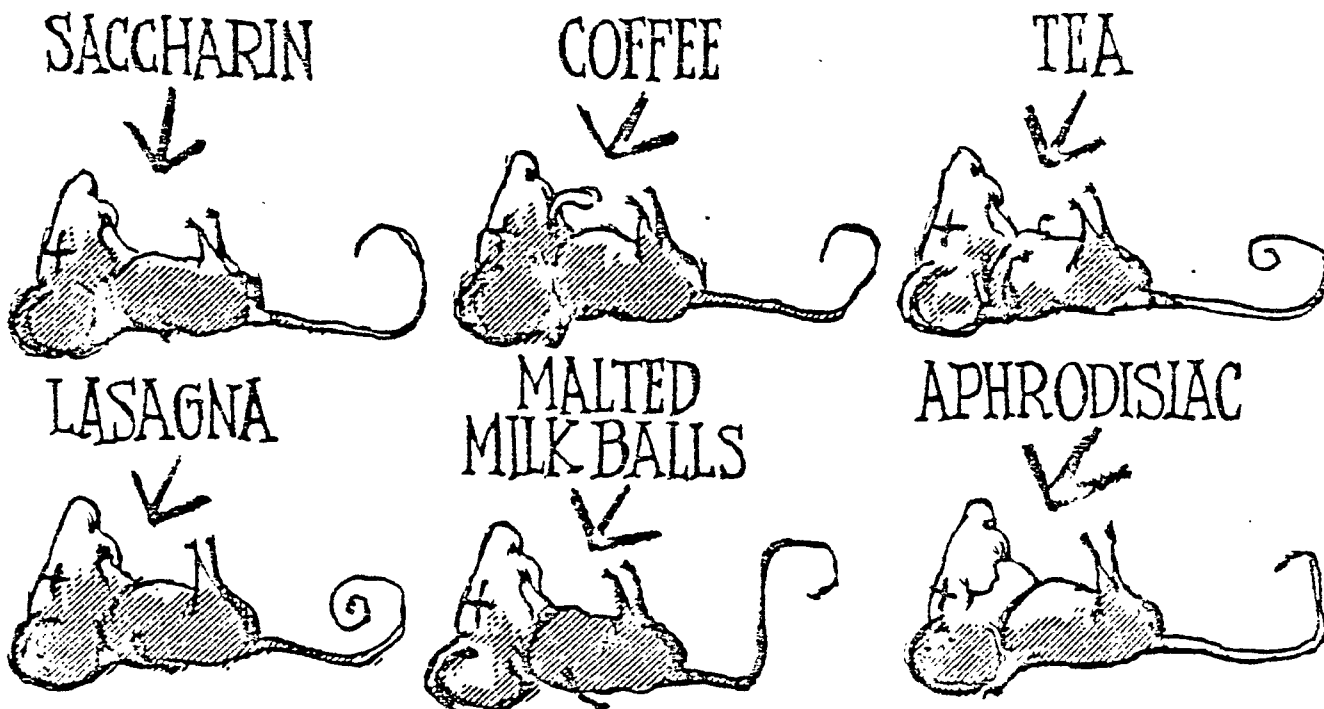
OL'TIMER'S CORNER

Cliff Presnall (Rt. 1, Box 50E, Hague, VA 22469) who was Chief of the Branch of Predator and Rodent Control for a few years until he retired in 1965 sent in his dues for 1981 to NADCA wondering if he could still be considered an "active" member. It seems his only control activities these days was the shooting of 13 groundhogs last year which were giving him trouble on his property. But Ruby is working on him to do some fox trapping this fall as her pet cat came up missing recently. He and Ruby celebrated their golden wedding anniversary in Yosemite and took a nostalgic tour of old National Park job sites at Zion and Bryce where Ruby's paintings of different tree species are still on display.

Never try to understand women. Ya wouldn't believe it anyway.

EPA KEY TO POST MORTEM SYMPTOMS

Russ Farringer sent us the following symptomatic changes that occur in laboratory mice killed by overdosing with various chemicals. This is another excellent example of the fine work the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is doing to make the world safe for white mice:



SOME COYOTES CAN'T WAIT

I've always made the prediction that after mankind has committed suicide with his nuclear toys, the vertebrates who would inherit the earth would be the rat and the coyote. Apparently coyotes don't intend to wait until that event. In a Los Angeles suburban backyard, the mother of 13-month old Lindsey Raser managed to chase a coyote away who had locked its jaws around the baby's midsection and was dragging her into a gully. The wounds had to be sutured at the emergency room of the Westlake Community Hospital. The article went on to quote Robert Howell, deputy agricultural commissioner, "We have only two qualified coyote trappers and the coyotes are very crafty and difficult to catch. The coyote problem is almost countywide now." Howell stated the coyotes are leading an easy life preying on pets and garbage cans. Four attacks on youngsters have been reported in the past two or three years. "Educating people how to live with coyotes is about the best we can do at this time", he said. [San Diego Union, July 18, 1980].

Those who think they know it all -- irritate those of us who do.

ANIMAL RIGHTS !!!!! - Homer S. Ford

Kathleen DeSalvo who was a worker for Initiative 336 to ban leghold traps in Washington in a letter to the Editor [SEATTLE TIMES 2 Sept. 1980] blames this "barbaric nation" for not supporting the initiative. With the typical muddled reasoning, half-truths and closed mind perseverance that characterize this type of mentality, she says: "There is rampant in America institutionalized cruelty to animals that you, as citizens, condone. To name a few: laboratory experimentation, factory farming, poisoning of predators on public lands and the use of the leghold trap to furnish women with dubious fashion and men with sport. These cruelties are part of our culture. Think about it. Think about the mythical reasoning given you by government and scientists for the perpetration of these brutalities, reasons which you accept because you cannot face the agonizing truths...We know something that you either never knew or have forgotten -- if people are kind and considerate to the least living thing [don't swat that mosquito !], how much easier to be kinder to our fellow men... To those few of you who sneered at us and vilified us, I would like to say: 'We are legion. Our initiative will be back. We are in this fight with motives than profit, greed and blatant cruelty. We are in this fight forever.'" Well in one thing at least she is right -- they will be back. Thus we have to keep our guard up and organize the opposition. As Milt pointed out in his article, emotions on both sides of the fence are strong. But I wonder what Ms DeSalvo would have written if it had been her baby the coyote wanted for a hors d'oeuvre?

In another article Rich Landers [columnist for the SPOKESMAN-REVIEW, Spokane, WA July 10, 1980] answered an attack on a previous column of his by Kathy Lobdell self-styled B.S. in Zoology and M.S. in Biology. To her claim that "Scientists generally agree that there is no evidence that trapping controls disease in wildlife populations, or that it protects the public from encounters with disease-carrying animals.", Landers quotes Errington's classic treatise on muskrats that concluded an annual harvest with sensible quotas was the best prescription for a healthy muskrat population. When wildlife populations get too high, Mother Nature steps in with disease, starvation or someother "inhumane" little trick to knock them down. Besides trappers keeping wildlife populations down for their own good, Landers points out that a well-managed beaver trapping program will leave enough beavers around for us

to enjoy, but keep the populations low enough so they won't spread into places they are not welcome. He mentioned the Idaho Fish & Game Department spent \$34,000 to remove beavers damaging farmers' property.

Incidentally that Oregon affair (Ballot No. 5) is heating up for election time. Those of you voting in Oregon better spread the word around. Homer sent a brochure the OREGONIANS AGAINST TRAPPING are handing out:

- ° About three out of four animals caught in traps are taken by accident. [did you realize you were such poor trappers ?]
- ° Trapped animals are either crippled, or die horribly of thirst, hunger, shock, exposure or injury. [We're not doing it right. On the trap lines I've run, every animal had to be shot or released]
- ° Over 95% of trapped animals in Oregon are taken for fur. [How many ear muffs can you make out of a Norway rat ?]
- ° More effective alternatives [sez who ?] are: Taste aversion, guard dogs, predator-proof fencing, herders, better animal husbandry, better animal management.
- ° Over \$1 million in local, state, and federal taxes subsidize Oregon farmers and ranchers each year through the USFWS, although the value of livestock losses reported is less than 1/4 this amount. [What would it be without that "subsidy" ?]
- ° Trapping for fur supports only about 200 part-time trappers in Oregon. [That shows how "big" the problem is and also how weak they think the opposition will be]
- ° Trapping license fees contribute only 1% to wildlife management funds [What did you expect from only 200 part-time trappers ?]
- ° Trapping, unlike hunting and fishing [they are next on the list], is not a sport. It is only legal commercial exploitation of wildlife.

Remember when Washington's face - - not his hands - - was on our money ?

DUN DENNIN' ???

With Andrus' ill-conceived ban on killing coyote pups in dens, I'm not exactly sure if a den trap is legal for federal types anymore. I saw Vic Keenan use a pup trap back in the good ol' days and now there is a description of a somewhat similar one for those of you who might have the need next Spring. [W.J. Forayt & A. Ruberser, A live trap for multiple capture of coyote pups from dens, J. Wildl. Mgt. 44(22):487-8 (1980)]. The trap uses a simple inward swinging door with a number of 1-inch holes drilled in it to let the pups see through. The inside of the door is studded with nails to keep the pups from trying to back out. A second door in the trap tends to move the pups away from the first door. The trap is put down into the den entrance. The writers claim adult coyotes did not visit the den when the trap was in place.

Prosperity is something you feel, fold and forward to Washington.

SEEN ANY BLACK-FOOTED FERRETS RECENTLY ?

Tom Hoffman, State Supervisor USFWS New Mexico District, would like to know what the other districts are doing about black-footed ferret surveys. He is called on

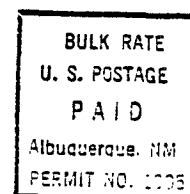
to certify there are no black-footed ferrets in a dogtown before it can be poisoned with either USFWS bait or commercial zinc phosphide bait from Colorado. He wonders what role the Endangered Species Division should play in this as he hasn't gotten any money or personnel from them to aid in the project.

Married men are more inventive than bachelors --- they gotta be.

YE ED - William D. Fitzwater

Here is a little gem of scientific knowledge passed on by Mae Hickman and Maxine Guy in their book CARE OF THE WILD FEATHERED AND FURRED (Unity Press, 1973):
"Do not use rat poison, since it can be carried by the rat, dropped in the feces, and eaten by other animals." Bet you didn't know that ?!

**National
Animal
Damage
Control
Association**



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